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# THE BULLETIN OF THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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## THE MAN OF THE AGE OF BRONZE

Once more the Museum has to acknowledge its indebtedness to Mr. and Mrs. Ralph King for a most important gift to the Museum. This time thanks are due for the bronze replica of Rodin's "Man of the Age of Bronze" (also called "The Awakening to Nature"), which has recently been installed in the Garden Court facing the Rotunda.

This work by Rodin has been the subject of innumerable comments by critics who run the gamut from highest praise to condemnation. To read what even a few of the more prominent writers have said of it since 1877, when it was first shown in the Salon, is indeed an illuminating study of the many things the human imagination can read into any production of a great creative genius.

Perhaps the most interesting single account is that in Judith Cladel's recent book, "Rodin, The Man and His Art." She says:

Rodin, . . . in the delicious surprise of the artist who sometimes sees himself surpassed by his own work, christened the statue "The Man of the Age of Bronze", that is to say, one who is passing from the unconsciousness of primitive man into the age of understanding and love. A few years later he gave it this still happier final name, "The Man who Awakens to Nature."

If one turns from Miss Cladel's account of Rodin's eighteen months of work on this notable figure, and of his long years of struggle for vindication from the ridiculous charge that it had been cast from a living model, to the comments in Kenyon Cox's "Painters and Sculptors," and to the interesting account of it in Muriel Ciolkowska's "Rodin," one is tempted to go further and find in periodicals like *LaPlum* and elsewhere the countless comments back and forth which, in themselves, attest to its importance as a work of genius which after all these fifty years and more is still tantalizing people to praise and criticism.

This is perhaps the highest tribute to its greatness, unless it is the lovely bronze itself, which breathes something no name can indicate, and brings to the spirit of our yearning age a quickening sense of the changelessness of the problem which confronts the groping soul of any age or condition.